595 They have as many wives as they want, especially the chiefs and their children. They even have them on different islands. The wives live in separate little huts and sleep with their husbands in succession, one during one month, the other the next month. The one who is sleeping with the husband serves him during this time and follows him everywhere, even to sea. If they surprise their wives in adultery or [584] if the wives become pregnant by another man, they usually kill them, even though they sometimes leave them for two or three years without going to see them. The men are free to leave their wives, [597] and [536] the wives may then remarry; but the wives do not have the right to leave their husbands. Even though the husband may have several wives, [152] these are hardly jealous, except perhaps rarely.

606 The husband never speaks to the father, mother, and brothers of his wife, unless they are drunk or are children. If he meets them on the same path, he avoids them by making a big detour. If necessity obliges them to speak, as when they are at sea, they turn their faces 585 away and cut the conversation short. They use no ceremony at all for their marriage. If the girl does not already belong to the man, [582] as the cousin issued from the [mother's] sister, he asks for her from the father or mother. They do not know what it is to speak of love. They rarely marry without the consent of their father or mother. The [133] men do not sleep with their wives unless they are really nubile and capable of having children. When the wives are delivered of child, ● 846 the husbands separate from them and they do not sleep together for five or six months. And they both fast—it is one of their most famous fasts—especially when their first child is a boy. The man fasts more rigorously than the woman, lest the child suffer. Father Raymond being at the home of The Baron at Dominica, went to see one of these fasters and as the Father spoke to him of this fast, the Carib told him that some men completely abstain from drinking and eating for the first five days after a childbirth by their wives, and then take nothing but some ouicou from the sixth to tenth days. After that they eat nothing but cassava and drink ouicou for the period of a month or two. Note that they eat nothing but the heart of the cassava and hang the rest with a cord for the feast. It is true that when they begin to eat, they eat and drink when they want, but nothing more than cassava and ouicou. When the day of the feast arrives, their friends assemble and one slashes the skin of the father's whole body with agouti teeth,

846 as if with a knife, until blood comes. Then the father is rubbed all over with spiced water which causes him great suffering. He is sometimes so weak from the fast and from this bleeding that he has to be led away by the hand, while the others get drunk at his expense, he continues to fast [60] for several more days. When the fast is over he does not eat, however, any birds or fish—except crabs, and they must be females—while his children are still feeble and weakly.

846 751 This faster gave Father Raymond very good reasons for all this. It is because, he said, the infants would have stomach aches or defective members, depending on which animals their fathers ate. They would have, for example, a long, round snout if the father ate an eel; small, round eyes if he ate a parrot. (For this same reason they never eat manatees, for fear their children will have small, round eyes like this large fish.) They would have crooked legs if the father ate pigs, and so forth for the other animals.

826 We will add here in passing this amusing fact: there is a type of carangid, which is a good fish with a slightly curved backbone. When they eat this fish, they take great care not to throw the bones carelessly away; they deposit them on the ground very softly for fear they may become hunchbacked and are astonished that the French make fun of this.

308 859 The women, having given birth, press the forehead of their infant with their hand in order to flatten it. That is the reason they have broad foreheads. When the infants sleep in the daytime, the women hold them so that their feet are on one of the mother's knees, while the head, which she continues to press with her hand, is on the other. At night, they hold the infants to their side, with the result that being accustomed to sleep so warmly, the child cries dreadfully if the mother moves ever so little away from its side.

At the end of fifteen days or three weeks, they invite a sort of godfather or godmother who pierces the ears, nose, and lower lip of the infant and cuts its hair in front and gives it its name. They, in exchange, rub his head and neck with oil. [sic] The mothers never wrap up their children when they go somewhere. They carry them under the arm in a little sling of cotton which they pass over the shoulder in the fashion of a scarf.

852 When the child is one or two years old, the father gives [61] a feast called <u>elétoaz</u> [<u>elétouac</u>] at which the child's hair is completely

502 little wooden pin set into the edge of a canoe which holds the paddle. [444] The tiller of a rudder is simply set, for there are no bolts, iron brace plates, or nails. However, it serves its purpose and they steer well at sea. [157] They use a long and strong pole which they carry in their canoes and pirogues in order to keep the prow headed into the waves and to keep the canoe from being thrown on shore. They also use this pole when embarking and disembarking. [265] For an anchor the Caribs use a great rock with small sticks fastened around it like a cage. They throw it into the sea and it is held by a heavy rope of mahot fiber which is fastened to the canoe. Those who [433] are able to do so trade with captains of ships to obtain cordage and anchors. [285] The conch shell is the horn and trumpet of the [534] Caribs. [60] They blow their horn when they intend to land. The Caribs always carry a conch shell in their pirogues to blow and announce their arrival to those of the carbet whom they are visiting. This is done in order that they may come to help them disembark, or if it is at night to bring fire so that the pirogue will not be run aground and broken. [467]

They make a raft by assembling and binding logs from which [396] they fish when they lack canoes. [87]

6. Birth, Education and Marriage

● 846 785 The Caribs observe fasts quite frequently, especially at the death of one of their relatives, upon the birth of their first child, after the capture of an enemy, etc. They usually spend the first five days without eating or drinking. The next four days they drink only a beverage made from boiled cassava. After this time they eat as much cassava starch as they like for a period of two or three months. After this period they continue to abstain from certain meats. The husband 846 rarely starts howling when his wife is in pangs of childbirth. On the contrary I have seen them coming from outdoors, secretly and stealthily, one month after the birth of the child in order to begin their seclusion and fasting. If one asks them questions about this custum they make no answer except to scorn those who do not follow the custom, although they do explain that if one does not behave in this way upon the child's birth, he would grow old sooner, be slower when he runs, and that internal disease would attack him strongly and this evil would spread to the child. [373]

674 as a fly," which is to say very drunk. It is thus understood that he has
562 been well judged. They very often kill the old people saying that they are no longer well and consequently are unhappy. When their wives are old they kill them, arguing as their reason that they are no longer able to tend to the garden or make cassava or ouicou /kind of beer/. They are jealous, and if a woman has failed them they kill her or make her a servant and slave to others. When they have suspicions about her misconduct they make her drunk—for their ouicou is potent when it is well made—and when she is in this state she can conceal nothing.

461 The men are extremely slothful and pass the time lying or sitting on their hammocks, carousing, gossiping, and allowing themselves to
[303] be combed by their wives. They cannot pass an hour without being combed and don't even take the trouble to fish or hunt, preferring to fast a little and eat only some cassava and crabs, rather than leave the house to catch lizards or tortoises, or some other thing. However,
[439] when they come to trade with the French they catch a tortoise and bring it with them. This is their principal item of trade. They sometimes bring pineapples and bananas as well as bows and arrows which
[572] they give to their comperes; this is the term they use for all their friends.

846 The Caribs have a ridiculous ceremony at the birth of their children. The woman gets up immediately after having given birth and goes back to work if she is able. The husband goes to bed /in a hammock/ which they hang high from the house, and here he complains about his belly and rubs it as if he were suffering greatly. For the span of an entire moon he leaves his hammock only for necessities, supporting himself with a stick. The others visit him as they would a sick man. It is true that to a certain extent they cause this pretended illness to pass into a real one because the man is badly treated. He must fast very rigorously for a few days, and they give him only cassava and very little of that, but they give him enough to drink, especially at the moment the child suckles. After several days he is able to eat crabs, and some time after this he is permitted tortoise meat; finally he eats any kind of food without limitation, as though he were completely healed. But before this they hold an assembly where the so-called sick man is gashed all over his body and loses much blood. Those fathers who have already had five or six children are only gashed
[854] on the arms and legs. They do not know what it is to swaddle children, nor do they treat them delicately as we do; but nevertheless they love them tenderly.

844 admirable effect for this purpose. I have talked about it in the section on plants, chapter one, paragraph four. The women do not have the trouble which is so fashionable among the women of Europe, for the baby is no sooner born than it is washed and put into a small cotton
846 hammock. The woman then takes up her housework as if nothing had happened. Rather it is as if the birth pangs had passed from the woman to her husband, for he begins to complain. Everyone consoles him and a hammock is hung inside from the roof of the house for him and he is visited as if he were sick. He is put on a diet which would cure gout and the great pox of the stoutest men of France. For myself I am astonished at how they can fast so long without dying, for they sometimes spend the first five days without drinking or eating anything. Afterwards, up to the tenth day they drink ouicou, which provides about the same nourishment as beer. When these ten days are over they start to eat cassava and they drink ouicou, but they abstain from everything else for an entire month. During this time they only eat the inside of the cassava so that the remainder resembles the edge of a shapeless hat. They keep the crusts which they hang from a string in the house and this cassava is saved for the day of the banquet, which takes place at the end of forty days.

After the forty days have passed they invite their relatives and best friends. Upon their arrival but before they start to eat, they gash the skin of the poor unfortunate man with agouti teeth and draw blood from every part of his body, so that with a man who is sick only in imagination they oftentimes cause a genuine sickness. But if I may use this metaphor it is now necessary to add sauce to the fish. This is to say they take sixty to eighty big grains of pimento or India pepper, the strongest that they are able to find, and after having mashed it thoroughly in water they take this spiced water and wash the wounds and scabs. I believe the poor man suffers no less than if he had been burned alive. However, he is not supposed to utter a single word, for if he did it would be considered cowardly and shameful. When this ceremony is over he is brought back to his hammock where he continues to stay for several days. The others go and have a good dinner and enjoy themselves in the carbet at his expense. But this is not all, for over the space of six full months he does not eat any birds or fish, firmly believing that this would harm the

●846 stomach of the child and that it would inherit the natural weaknesses of the animals which the father had eaten. For example, if the father ate tortoise the child would be deaf and would have no more brains than this animal and if he ate manatee the child's eyes would resemble those of this animal i.e., small and round. There are many similar examples of the same thing.

Finally, during all of this time they have absolutely no intercourse with their wives. Brutality, weakness, and unbridled lust, typical of the greater part of our Christians, is sufficiently restrained by these barbarians who have neither faith nor religion. In addition, as soon
[843] as their wives conceive they have no further intercourse.

304 The women also fast during the time after the birth of their child, but not so rigorously as their husbands. They prepare themselves by this means and take great care to flatten the foreheads of their babies while the bone is still pliable. They push in the nose to make it flat. However, many of them may be found who have aquiline noses which look just like the noses of the French.

852 Eight days after the six month period the father invites one of his
553 most intimate friends to be the godfather of his son, or if the child is a girl, the friend is called a godmother. They have a small banquet and then cut a little hair from the head of the child. They pierce the ear lobe and also the septum of the nose and they pass two or three threads of cotton through the hole to make certain that the wound will not mend itself. Next they pierce the lower lip. If they think that the child is too weak to stand this pain they postpone the piercing and content themselves with cutting its hair. This being done they give the child the name which will be his for life /but/ which does not prevent the taking of other names. But that name will be with him always and in recognition of the fact the father and mother of the child anoint the neck and head of the godfather or godmother with oil of palmetto.

854 It is astonishing to see how few Carib children are deformed con-
[732] sidering the fact that their mothers never swaddle them; in this respect the Carib women would be able to mock at our French women who pamper their children. When the children have gained strength
[853] through their mother's milk they are then given some sweet potatoes or bananas which are first chewed by the mothers and then put into the mouths of their babies.

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and childhood.—Sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy. The birth often took place by a fire. If it caused trouble, the woman drank juice made from a certain root. Afterward she washed the child in a stream and placed it in a tiny hammock or on a couch of leaves. If the birth had taken place at night, the men of the house bathed themselves so that the child would not catch cold. 844

For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he complained of pains, went to a separate hut, and lay in a hammock. He remained there for at least 40 days after the birth of his first child, and for 4 or 5 days after the birth of other children. During this time he went out only at night and avoided meeting anyone for fear that they might tempt him to break his fast, thereby making the mother sick and the child cowardly. At first he took no food. After 5 days he was permitted to drink corn beer and after 10 days to eat manioc bread in increasing quantities. He ate only the insides of the bread, the crusts being hung up in the hut until the end of the 40-day period, when they served as the basis for a feast in the village carbet. Preceding the feast the father was brought into the carbet, was stood on two large flat cakes of cassava, and was scarified by two men chosen by the carbet chief. A mixture of urucú, pepper seeds, and tobacco juice was rubbed into the cuts, and the blood which fell from them was daubed on the face of the child so that he would have the courage shown by the father in undergoing scarification. The man was then fed the two cassava cakes upon which he had stood and also fish, which he had to spit out. He went back to bed for several days and had to abstain from the flesh of animals for a period of 6 months or a year, lest the child become deformed.[7] 846

The child received its first name 12 or 15 days after birth from a friend of the father who acted as godfather or godmother. The name was taken from that of an ancestor, from nature, or from something that had happened during birth, pregnancy, or the couvade. If the baby were strong enough to bear it, his ears, nose, and lips were pierced at the same time, but this might be deferred until 2 years had passed, when the child's hair was cut. 551 553 [304]

At first all children ate with the mother; when 4 or 5 years old the boys began to eat in the men's house. The fathers spent much time in training their sons in hunting, fishing, swimming, singing, basketry, making canoes, and particularly in shooting the bow and arrow, at which they had [853] 868

[7] The accounts of the couvade vary considerably from source to source. The above version is taken largely from Davies (1666, pp. 336–338), with supplemental data from La Borde (1856, pp. 249–250).

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950
ST13 Callinago ST13

The Meaning of Dietary and Occupational Restrictions Among the Island Carib

By DOUGLAS TAYLOR

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MOST famous among the several "retreats and fasts" undergone by the Island Carib of early Colonial times is that which has come to be identified as the *couvade;* and which still is practised, in a modified form, by the Carib Indian remnant on Dominica and by the Black Carib in Central America. As elsewhere (and notably in South America), this custom is based, immediately, upon the belief that a child's welfare, both before and for some time subsequent to its birth, may be affected by either the diet or the activities of the father as well as by those of the mother; but there is every reason to think—at least in so far as the Island Carib are concerned—that this is but one particular application of a more general concept: namely, that according to which an individual's occasional vulnerability to harmful forces may be alleviated or aggravated by the state not only of his (or her) own bodily "humors," but also by those of his (or her) associates.

Breton described the custom as he observed it among the mid-seventeenth century Dominica Carib in the following terms:[1]

> *Iuenematobu*, my first-born, my fasting-matter. The Savages observe fasts rather often: particularly when a death occurs among them, on the arrival of a first child, and after the capture of an enemy, etc. They usually spend the first five days without eating or drinking, and for the next four take only a drink made from boiled cassava-cake; but after this, they may eat as much starch-cassava as they like during two or three months, at the end of which they (only) abstain from some kinds of flesh. It is not likely that the husband should start to cry out like a woman in child-birth. On the contrary, I've seen them come home secretly and stealthily, a month after the birth, to undergo their retreat and fasts; for which they give no other reason, to those who ask, than that of the scorn in which are held those who do not observe this custom: *that they grow old sooner, are slower on their feet, that the abundance of their humours would corrupt them, and that the sickness would pass over to the child, etc.*[2]

Armand de la Paix, who obtained much of his material from Breton, wrote:

> When their wives have been confined, husbands withdraw; and they do not sleep together until five or six months later. *And both observe a fast* which is quite famous, especially if their first child be a boy. The man fasts more rigorously than the woman, for fear that the child might suffer . . . the Savage told him (Breton) that some abstain altogether, for the first five days after their wives' delivery, from eating and drinking, and thereafter until the tenth day take nothing but cassava-beer. After that, they eat only cassava and drink only cassava-beer *for a month or two*. . . . When the fast is over,

[1] Translations are by the author, as also is the italicization of certain passages they contain.
[2] Breton, 1892, p. 373.

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950
ST13 Callinago ST13

they still eat no fish or fowl—unless it be crabs, and these must be female—so long as their children remain feeble and weakly. . . . Otherwise, he said, the children would have stomach-ache, or else bodily deformations resembling the animals that their fathers had eaten.[3]

Further details are given by du Tertre and by La Borde.[4] For a first-born male child, the father's retreat lasted three months; for other births, only five or six days; and during this period, he lived in a separate building and avoided those who were leading a normal life. But for six months after the birth of any child of his, he had to abstain from eating the flesh of certain animals. The mother also fasted for some—du Tertre says forty—days, drinking only warmed water, and eating dry cassava. On no account, says La Borde, must she eat female crabs. The child was bathed immediately after birth; and, so that it should not catch cold if this took place at night, all the men in the carbet got up and went out to bathe also.

When a death occurred:

The children of the deceased or his wife cut their hair in sign of mourning. They *also fast for one or two months.* Father Raymond (Breton) asked them whether this fast helped the dead in any way, and they said: no; but that those who did not fast *would grow old sooner, be unsure of foot* and unable to see fish in the water, and that they would be liable to surprise by their enemies.[5]

Similarly:

When girls begin to have their flowers, they make them *fast for one or two months;* as also the boys, when these attain their adolescence; and they have them scarified with aguti-teeth.[6]

According to La Borde, if a Carib were wounded when away from home, he would send immediately to tell the members of his family, so that these might not, by continuing their normal diet and activities, become the involuntary cause of aggravating his affliction. It may be gathered, moreover, that they were not always disposed to co-operate fully in this matter; for we are told that:

> The kin never, or but very rarely, visit their sick; and married (*du Tertre says:* newly married) people generally do not go at all, because, they say, *there emanates from their body a principle which afflicts the sick person the more.* For this reason, when one of the Baron's sons was sick, neither his brothers nor his sisters nor his father went to see him; *only his mother looked after him, and she kept away from the father.*[7]

We are also told that fasting was a prerequisite for the would-be *buiei* or shaman, and for candidates for chieftaincy.

[3] *In* Rennard, 1929, pp. 59–60.
[4] du Tertre, 1667–71, vol. II, p. 412; La Borde, *in* Hennepin, 1704, pp. 587–593.
[5] Armand de la Paix, *in* Rennard, 1929, pp. 72–73.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 61. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950
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843 child had been born with a tail because the father had killed a monkey; and in yet
784 another, that a child always howled in bad weather because its mother had eaten "baboon" (Howling-monkey, Carib: *arauada*) while pregnant.[10]

784 Similar beliefs are also current among the present-day Carib Indians in
846 Dominica. Following her delivery, the mother must abstain from stimulants, acidulous fruits and juices, and from all "heating" foods and condiments for forty days. The list of forbidden items may vary in detail from family to family, but in all cases it would almost certainly include: coffee, all citrus, pork, game, turtle, crabs, and the dearly loved red-pepper (*Caspicum*). Nor must she take throughout this period, any water or other beverage that has not been previously warmed. On the third day, she is given a purgative infusion; and only after this has taken effect is the baby put to suckle her. Numerous and various herbs and leaves are collected by the wise-woman (who is often the parturient's mother), and put to steep in hot water. On the ninth day, a large pot of this concoction is drawn off and, after mother and child have been ritually bathed in the remainder, given to the former to drink. Her period of seclusion ended, the mother goes to bathe in the sea. The ritual nature of these baths appears from the fact that, for ordinary hygienic purposes, mother and child are bathed upon delivery, and daily thereafter; and while women, like men, normally bathe daily in the river for cleanliness, and but occasionally in the sea for fun, a pregnant woman is debarred from the latter diversion on the grounds that this would make the sea "rise" (in storm).[11]

The precautions observed by the new father are less exacting today, but quite as important. Throughout the forty-day period of his wife's seclusion, he must abstain from all sexual intercourse, be it with his wife or another; for any laxity in this regard might bring about his child's death. Nor must he, for an indeterminate though usually shorter period, undertake any activity demanding strenuous physical exertion or the use of sharp instruments or dangerous weapons. Negligence in this respect on his part is said to bring on colic, diarrhoea, and vomiting in the child; or to cause its navel to bleed and fail to heal properly. As a precaution, the father may tie a homespun thread of wild-pineapple fibre around his loins, and another round those of the infant; but should a mishap of this nature actually occur, he would rub the child's body with his own axillary sweat, or give a piece of his sweat-soaked shirt to be boiled in water, which would then be administered to the ailing infant as a medicine.

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[10] Author's unpublished ms.

[11] These data were obtained primarily by personal observation among the Dominica Carib; but tally for the most part with the accounts given by Black Carib informants in British Honduras. Material for the remaining descriptive paragraphs was obtained partly by direct observation and partly through informants in both places.

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950 .
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On the other hand, a new-born child may be adversely affected by the diet or activities not only of its mother and father, but also by those of any others who come near it. Mother and child should not be visited, moreover, by persons who are in any way "abnormal." For the Carib this includes—besides those who are deformed, disabled, or lacking in some sense or faculty—all who are, to use a current expression, "heaty": this epithet being applicable both to pregnant or menstruating women, and to anyone who is momentarily heated by exertion, excitement, or emotion.

Girls and women are required to observe both dietary and occupational restrictions during their menstrual periods. At these times, they must on no account eat any products of the chase killed by dog or gun. One informant told how his dogs had inexplicably become heavy and incapable of speed; and how, on hearing a sort of slopping noise in their bellies, he had made investigations, and discovered that his own sister, out of gluttony, had concealed her condition and partaken of his last catch. Some say that a gun or dogs so "spoiled" may be "blessed," and thus put back to rights; but that in this case, it is the guilty woman who will then suffer for her negligence. Nor must menstruating women handle the hunter's dogs or weapons, cook food, or take part in ceremonial songs and dances. They should not, moreover, wander abroad nor bathe in the river, since spirits of the bush and of the water alike are addicted to women in this condition.

In British Honduras, though no longer in Dominica, the bereaved spouse must observe certain restrictions on diet and freedom of movement; but the extent and duration of these are largely dependent, at the present time, upon the degree of conservatism prevailing in the family concerned. However, it is generally held to be dangerous for a widow to go to the manioc-field for several months—some say eight—after the death of her husband.

From a comparison of the two sets of data, it seems clear, at least, that the "mystical participation" of the father in the life of his new-born child was—and is—by no means unique in Island Carib concept; and that the form, duration, and sanctions for the restrictions tended to be the same when these were undergone for one's own sake alone as when they were imposed, primarily, for that of another. As we have seen, not only the new-born child, but also its father, the sick and the wounded, and, in fact, all those turning one of life's critical corners, are or were thought to be endangered by a sort of physical exuberance emanating from heated, overfed, sexually or otherwise excited, pregnant, or menstruating bodies, be it their own or those of others associating with them. For the seventeenth century, the same period of seclusion—one or two months—is indicated for the bereaved, the slayer, the new father of a first child, or the adolescent; and for the first three of these, the same sanctions—growing old sooner, being less sure-footed, etc.—are mentioned explicitly. The voluntarily undergone deprivations and sufferings of the old-time Carib

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950
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were not intended to assist the spirit of a deceased spouse or parent, nor to atone for the slaying of an enemy; but rather were they meant to protect the living by a procedure which can only be described as "turning off the heat" at those points most susceptible to contagion or attack; and the same was probably true in the case of neophytes and adolescents. For obvious reasons, the new-born, the sick, and the wounded had more to fear from others' exuberant "humors" than from their own; and the bathing, after a nocturnal delivery, of all the household's possibly sexually excited men, the taboo against the visits of married or newly married people to those who were sick, and the modern avoidance of confined mother and child by those who are "heaty," all tend to the same conclusion: that we are not justified in regarding the "couvade" as a distinct phenomenon as far as this culture is concerned.

It is understandable that there should be some ambiguity in the situation of new parents of a first child, since they, as well as their offspring, are at a vital turning-point, and hence in need of protection. Nor is it surprising that the new mother must submit to some chastening of her "animal spirits"; for, attenuated as these may be by her confinement, they still would be "too strong" for the baby she has to suckle, if not indeed sufficiently so as to endanger herself. It is noteworthy that the same period of seclusion as is observed today—forty days—was reported by du Tertre in the seventeenth century; and if the old chroniclers say little about the parturient's regimen, it is doubtless because they assumed it to be analogous to that current in their own culture. Rather naturally, what struck them was that the father's physical exuberance should be feared—for himself, for his wife, and for the child; and that if his first-born were a son, he must fast more rigorously than the mother. But it would appear that he also possessed, in his own body, a valuable antidote to the evil effects which another's—or even his own—negligence might bring upon the infant; for we are told that a sickly child was rubbed with blood which the father drew from himself by scarification; and we have seen that his sweat is held at the present time to have similar therapeutic virtues when employed in the same way.

In most cultures and at most times, various restrictions have been placed on menstruating women; yet without the concept of some mystical intercourse between killer and killed, eater and eaten, it would be hard to explain how a hunter's dog (or gun) could be contaminated by a menstruating woman's ingestion of its catch, or how such a woman could then be affected by the "blessing" of the injured instrument.

Despite the considerable differences of content and extension which distinguish the dietary and occupational restrictions of 1950 from those of 1650, we still may recognize the same underlying conceptual pattern of "contagion." By this term is to be understood here the sum of potentially harmful or undesirable factors—be they impersonal forces or spirits—to which an individual

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
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garments, occasionally, and beads. . . . The Guiana Indians still make fire by rubbing two sticks together; they make baskets similar to those now made by the West-Indian Caribs, as well as cassava sieves, *matapies*, or cassava strainers, and other articles of the Indian economy. . . . Cotton is preferred by the Caribs to all other fibers. They still use the *tiki*, or wooden war-club, the only aboriginal weapon now in use. . . . The celebrated ourali poison is made chiefly by a single tribe, the Macusis, and particular Indians. . . . In the shell mounds, the objects found resemble those from the West Indies; and human bones have been found split open, as if for their marrow. Of aboriginal art, as shown in paintings or carvings, there are few traces, the petroglyphs being few and very rude in design and execution. . . . One practice still prevails among the Caribs of which we find no trace in the island: that is *couvade*, or male child-bed, when the man, at parturition, takes to his hammock, where he stays for days, and even weeks (if he be delicate), and is fed on gruel, abstains from smoking, and is comfortably coddled, while the poor woman attends to her hardly-interrupted domestic duties. In conclusion, as to the religion of the Guiana Caribs, it is a pure animism; every Indian believes that he himself, and every human being, consists of two parts, a body and a soul, or spirit; and moreover, that all other objects have the same qualities; the whole Indian world swarms with spirits, good and evil. They do not believe in a spiritual hierarchy, — only in spirits that are, or once were, situated in material bodies of some kind, — and no apotheosis has of these made gods, or a God. . . . The Carib name for God, *Tamosi*, means the Ancient One. . . . As to scientific acquirements, the Indian, now, as in ancient times, is without even the rudiments of scientific thought . . . "

CARIB PETROGLYPHS, IMPLEMENTS, AND POTTERY. Were it not even that we still have evidence of the existence in the Carib area of Indians who dwell here, in the con-

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
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custom) men did not have intercourse with a woman while she was pregnant; 834
though whether this was intended (like the post-puerperal sexual abstinence recorded by Breton) to safeguard the child, he does not say. The modern Carib does not rationalize this custom, but says it is a matter of taste.

Soon after a child is born [writes Breton] the woman chosen for that purpose 304
reshapes its head by kneading, widening the crown and bringing it down in an equal 846
slope to the eyes, so that the forehead is on a line with the rest.

The mother endeavored to maintain this shape by exerting pressure on the child's head whenever it was asleep on her lap.

Children were named "unofficially" at birth by their mothers or grand- 553
mothers. Later—Breton says eight days, Rochefort twelve to fifteen days, and 852
Du Tertre six months and eight days after birth—a man and a woman were chosen as sponsors to impose a "true" name on the child. It was also they who pierced its ears, underlip, and the division of its nostrils (for the future wearing of karákuli, etc.). The "baby-name," or rather an abbreviated form of it together with that of the father, was the one employed in reference, etc. Thus Kuy´-lírahī-íme stood for Kuy´mene (baby-name) lírahī (*his child*) `Imeruái (father's baby-name). (This custom still obtains, Hamilton the son of Nicolas being currently spoken of as Ham-Nini.) The true name might be retained or changed in after life, but it must be kept secret from all but intimates.

After the birth of his first child, the Island Carib father practised what we 785
now call the couvade; and explained this custom by saying that should he omit [846]
it, not only would others scorn him, but he would the sooner get old and infirm himself, while his new-born child also would suffer. However, under the heading ihwenemátobu *mon premier né, le sujet de mon jeusne* (also *phantaisie*: cf. ihwénɔte *a dream;* ihwenémali *a fast*), Breton states that these fasts were practised "particularly at the death of one of their family, at the coming of the first child, and at the capture of an enemy, etc." Moreover they did not necessarily begin coincidentally with the accouchement, etc.: "on the contrary I have seen them come from without, stealthily and in secret a month after the birth, to perform their retreat and fasts." Elsewhere we read of similar prescriptions for candidates for a chieftainship, for would-be shamans, and for girls at the time of their first menses. Ordinarily, these fasts consisted in the faster's lying up in his hammock and abstaining from all food and drink for five days, and from all but boiled cassava drink for another four (Breton). According to Du Tertre, after the first five days besides drinking wiku men ate the centers of cassava-cakes whose outer rims were then strung up and reserved for the elétuak festival. After these nine days they ate manioc-starch cassava-cakes as much as

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
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591 (1) Father; mother; married daughter, her husband and their children; two unmarried daughters, both with children; one unmarried son.

592 Three other married daughters have separate establishments in the immediate vicinity, as does one married son. Another married son lives with his wife's family some miles away, and one married daughter lives with her husband's people.

(2) Widowed mother; married daughter, her husband, and their children; widowed son; grandson (the latter is the son of another married daughter who has a separate neighboring establishment).

The widowed son's children live with their maternal grandmother.

(3) Father; mother; mother's pre-marital married daughter with her pre-marital son and her husband; mother's pre-marital son; unmarried daughter and her children; son; small son; small daughter.

586 Legal divorce is unknown to these Caribs, though they apply the word "divorce" to any separation between couples married legally or otherwise, of which there are several examples. In one case the wife left her husband because of ill-treatment; in another the husband abandoned his wife and fled to Guadeloupe (where he remarried) because he was in trouble with the English law; while yet another husband "divorced" because he could not get on with his wife's mother. Separation on grounds of sexual infidelity is very rare—chiefly because such a reason is considered too trivial to break up the union. Widows and widowers are free to remarry as and when they please.

585 Newly married couples as such are subject to no special restrictions, nor is [606] there any formal avoidance of parents-in-law. Customs and beliefs affecting ● [845] behavior at the menstrual period, during pregnancy, and after childbirth have been discussed in another paper.[7] In as far as the latter concern the father as well as the mother, they show vestiges of the couvade.

847 As illegitimate children and their parents are in no way stigmatized, abortion is rare and generally condemned (although on account of changing economic 844 conditions it appears to be now on the increase). Parturition takes place in a crouching position, usually with the aid of the parturient's mother or of some [827] old sage-femme, who employs massage and various herbal teas or potions (such as a draught of a boy's urine) if she considers it necessary to hasten labor. When she has cut and bound the navel cord, and bathed the child, the sage-femme (or [307] maternal grandmother) takes the infant on her lap, and inserts a finger under

7 Douglas Taylor, *Carib Folk-Beliefs and Customs from Dominica, B. W. I.* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 1, pp. 507-530, 1945), p. 519.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
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its tongue "to break the thread" (?) so that it may the sooner learn to speak. Then she stretches the limbs, pinches the nose, and "gives the head a nice shape" by pressing the forehead with her thumb-pads upward and backward from the supraorbital ridges toward the crown. This proceeding is continued by massaging the forehead, using a circular and upward motion of the palm of the hand. No measures are taken today to maintain the head-shape thus given, and "only old-timers bother to make a child look nice, nowadays." A bulbous or protruding forehead is considered ugly.

The accouchée has to submit to a strict regime for forty days, but the newborn child is suckled in what to us is a haphazard way, given arrowroot or *Canna* starch and herbal teas from the start, and handled by all members of the household.

The baby-name given to the child at birth is today that by which it is registered; while the "true" name, chosen by the sponsor of like sex, is that now given in baptism. This rite, at which the parents do not assist, usually takes place a month or so after birth, and is followed by either a feast or dance or both. Godparents are chosen rather for their social or economic status than for any spiritual qualities. The relationship is, however, taken very seriously, and parents and godparents address one another as "compère" and "commère." The ears of female infants are pierced and a thread passed through the hole in order to keep it open until such time as rings are acquired.

Apart from the baby-name and patronymic (baptismal names are, at least among older Caribs, not easily divulged) modern Caribs are supposed to have surnames, which they call titres *titles*. But these are infrequently and irregularly employed, and usually consist of the given name of a grandfather or greatgrandfather. Brothers sometimes bear different "titles"! Illegitimate children take their father's name (as patronymic) and "title."

As soon as they learn to walk, Carib children follow their mothers or big sisters to the river morning and evening, and so acquire early a taste for bathing and the habit of carrying little calabashes of water or other loads more in play than in earnest. Soon their fathers or big brothers make for them tiny carry-alls (shoulder-baskets), traps, fishing rods, etc., so that play and work merge into one another. One of the few non-utilitarian amusements—for some grown-ups as well as for children—is to "run the waves" (courir lames), a local variety of surf-riding which Breton also recorded. When available, the "toez" of a canoe—a plank seat about 9 inches wide by 2½ to 3 ft long—is used; but with a favorable surf, very good "rides" may be had without it, merely by stiffening the body and using the outstretched hands as a rudder.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
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of the words black-listed by Breton as "point mots Sauvages," he himself gives what is probably the parent Carib form under "*cousi à boire* couáikeu," phonetically ['kwɛkɛ].

Rouse omits to mention two important classes of kitchen utensils: the mortar (ánna), and the manioc trough (batáia), both carved out of single pieces of wood, the latter being just as important to the manioc complex as the stone-chip grater (eke), the basketry squeezer (rukúma) and sifter (hibúle), and the cassava-plate or griddle (butáli).

"Corn, sweetpotatoes, yams, beans, and peppers also were cultivated, the corn being made into bread as among the *Arawak*." Rouse elsewhere mentions corn beer.[28] Corn is and apparently always was of very secondary importance to the Carib, and it seems doubtful whether the Carib ever made much use of bread or beer made from it. Breton has this to say about it:

> After it has grown, that is to say two months after it has been sown, the Savages gather and roast it on the coals, then eat it. The Galibi make from it a fermented drink which is not inferior to beer. The French use it to feed poultry, while some turn it into flour, which they mix with an equal quantity of wheat flour, and make with this a fine bread which tastes quite good.[29]

Breton elsewhere describes at length the making of cassava-beer (uéku), and speaks of a beverage of boiled cassavas in connection with the couvade. On the other hand, the only use made of corn by the modern Dominica Carib is that described in the first sentence of the above quotation from Breton. Botanists usually describe yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) as of Old World origin, but it now seems certain that a species of *Dioscorea trifida*, known to the Carib as kúšu, and formerly much employed by them, was American. Two other food plants, not listed by Rouse but fairly important to the Carib of Breton's day and at the present time, are *Xanthosoma* spp. (uáho) and pumpkin (uauáiama). By "guayba," Rouse presumably means *guava*, Carib: kuiábu.

We are told that hammocks were "made of a network of cotton thread," and that "the weaving of cloth may not have been an original part of Carib culture. The women had wooden spindles for making thread and used belt looms for weaving it. They stretched the warp threads from a stick on one side of the house to a stick on the other; then two women wove in the weft, beating the threads down with a sword shaped stick."[30] Breton, on the other hand, describes the

28 *Handbook*, pp. 551-557.
29 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
30 *Handbook*, pp. 552, 555.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
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urukámbui, "closes the pores, prevents the seawater from drying on their skins, keeps off mosquitoes, and kills chigoes."[32]

Carib basketry was and still is made from *Ischnosiphon arouma* (Aublet) Koernicke, the "ouallónian" of Breton's or the uarúmã of our own time and spelling, and not, as Rouse says, from "Latania" (presumably an anglicization of French latanier, from Carib alátani, which is the small fan-palm, *Coccothrinax martinicensis* Beccari), whose leaves served as thatching and for making rough sunshades, umbrellas, bags, etc., but could not possibly be employed in the typical wicker pattern and twilled basketry of the Carib. As in Breton's time, so today Carib baskets have a double wall and cover like those of the Taino described by Rouse,[34] but such baskets are and may be rendered waterproof only by the insertion of one or more intermediary layers of leaves. The *Mytilus edulis* is not found in the Lesser Antilles today, and it seems probable that the "mussel" whose shells were used, according to Rouse,[35] in scraping strands employed for basketry, refers to some other species.

Although it may not be possible, as Rouse says, to substantiate Gower's statement that descent was matrilineal among the Island Carib, this feature is at least implicit in the kinship terminology.

Breton is in disagreement with Rouse's authorities on several points concerning the life cycle. Of a husband's relations with his wives, he says:

> they [the wives] have their turn month and month about, even when they are pregnant; after childbirth they [the husbands] remain without seeing them for a good while, for fear of harming the child.[36]

In seeming contradiction, Rouse says that sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy, and does not mention post-puerperal abstinence.[37] The solution may perhaps be found in the attitude of the modern Carib father, who says that while abstinence during pregnancy is a matter of taste, intercourse during the forty-day period following birth would be injurious to the child. Rouse notes that the accounts of the couvade vary considerably, his own being "taken largely from Davies, with supplemental data from La Borde:" "For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he com-

33 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
34 *Handbook*, p. 527.
35 *Handbook*, p. 554.
36 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 278.
37 *Handbook*, p. 557.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
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plained of pains, went to a separate hut, and lay in a hammock."[38] Breton has answered this last statement by saying: "it is not likely that the husband should cry out like a woman in labour; on the contrary, I've seen them come from without, secretly and stealthily, a month after the birth, in order to make their retreat and fast."[39] This is, at least, more in accordance with all modern reports of the custom. Moreover, it is disconcerting if not misleading to insist upon the "otherness" of the father's part, after rightly noting that the restrictions affected both parents; especially since precautions similar to those characterizing the Carib's "couvade" were also taken at puberty, after the death of a relative or the slaying of an enemy, and by candidates for chieftaincy or shamanship. Breton nowhere mentions any special taboo on the names of the dead, while la Borde merely says that they were avoided so as not to evoke thoughts of death. The former does say, however, that names were not used as forms of address to any but children; and that everybody's real name was kept secret from all but intimates. And, while Breton mentions that his wife was the only woman who might eat with a man, his failure to report that even this was limited to the occasion of their marriage suggests that there was no hard and fast rule about such matters. A summary cannot include everything; but the studied omissions or contradictions of a man like Breton, who had read, before publishing his own work, the accounts of Armand de la Paix, du Puis, du Tertre, and Rochefort—all of whom had sought and obtained his advice and help—cannot well be ignored. My own article on the *Kinship and Social Structure of the Island Carib* resumés some of these points at greater length.[40]

Perhaps the most unsatisfactory part of the whole summary of Carib culture is the section on "Religion and Shamanism,"[41] which perpetuates the myth that the Carib invoked and made offerings to "the evil spirits (maboya)." Already Breton protested (and in the matter of religion, at least, he cannot be accused of prejudice in the Caribs' favor) that "There is in the belief of the Savages as much difference between Ichéiri & Mápoya as between God & devil among ourselves; and it is unheard of among them that any one should offer sacrifices to mápoya,"[42] while la Borde notes: "Ils craignent Máboia, mais ils ne lui rendent aucun culte." Thirty-five years ago Roth, in his *Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*, argued conclusively against this somewhat mischievous concep-

38 *Ibid.*
39 Breton, *op. cit.*, pp. 373-374.
40 Taylor, *Kinship and Social Structure; Carib Folk Beliefs.*
41 *Handbook*, pp. 561-563.
42 Breton, *Dictionaire Caraïbe-Français*, pp. 283-284.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

824X
283

of the Dominica Caribs, is included here. The plant is to be found growing in most Carib dooryard gardens. Leaves of la pite are split for half their length. Then a strong cord attached at convenient height to a tree is twisted into a loop around one of the split segments and pulled tight. The other end of the leaf is wound around a short thick stick held with both hands. A strong steady tug on the latter disengages the leaf fiber. The other segment is treated in like manner, and finally the unsplit half of the leaf as a whole (the disengaged fiber being now used to wrap around the stick). After being dried in the sun the strong white fiber (up to four feet long) is spun on the leg or thigh into any thickness of fishing line that is required. Most of it is twine (i. e. 2-ply) but 3 and even 5-ply are sometimes made. La pite is used also to make thread which is always strengthened before use by reining with *mani* (see discussion of *mani* under *Symphonia globulifera*). Such thread is employed for sewing the edging of laroman (*Ischnosiphon Arouma*) baskets, and for making the little cords worn by father and new-born child as a protective charm to ensure the latter from suffering possible ill consequences of strenuous work undertaken by the father.

[951
846]

Specimen citation: 101 (T), 3306. Both specimens represent la pite.

824Y
262

Bromelia karatas Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 285. 1753.
Pingouin, Karatas. — *karátas* (w).

Pingouin is known from the Antilles and occurs on the continent from Mexico to Colombia and Brazil. The plant occurs in Dominica chiefly at lower elevations in the drier thickets of the windward coast.

Likely a specially grown fibrous form of edible *Ananas comosus*. Plants of la pite differ from the common pineapple in having longer leaves with fewer and more widely spaced marginal prickles; moreover the fruit is small (no larger than one's fist) and is said to be indigestible. Compared with the fibers of la pite those contained in the leaves of the ordinary pineapple are considered by the Caribs very weak and therefore cannot be prepared for twine. Pittier (40) however states that the fibers of pineapple leaves are «fine, strong, and of great value». The Kruna grass, grown by the Barama River Caribs of Guiana, is possibly identical with la pite. Kruna grass is a source of fiber used in the manufacture of bow strings, fish lines, and decorative ligatures for the legs.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

824 X

Coccoloba uvifera (Linnaeus) Jacquin, Enum. 19. 1760.
Sea Grape. — Raisin Bord-de-mer. — *bdibai* (m), *ulil* (w).

The sea grape is a widespread littoral species of the West Indies and continental tropical America.

The hard timber has various uses but at one time was used [411] by the Caribs for war clubs, and the like. From the scraped bark is obtained a gum which dries hard and which was formerly [314] employed as a varnish on painted and split stems of larouman (*Ischnosiphon arouma*). The fruits are eaten and in the past were [272] crushed in water to make a beverage.

Specimen citation: 1605, 3316.

CHENOPODIACEAE. Goosefoot Family.

Chenopodium ambrosioides Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 219. 1753.
Chenopodium anthelminticum Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 220. 1753.
Wormseed. — Semen Contra.

Wormseed is a strong-scented annual plant widely distributed in the temperate and tropical regions of both the Old and New World.

A «tea» made from its leaves is drunk by the Carib as a [278] beverage or is used to deworm children. The leaves are also one constituent of a ritual bath given to the mother after childbirth [847] (see *Ocimum micranthum*).

Specimen citation: 3364.

AMARANTHACEAE. Amaranth Family.

Amaranthus spp.
Epinard, L'Epinard.

Weedy species of this genus are common throughout the world, and many can be employed as potherbs. At least two species, *Amaranthus viridis* L. and *Amaranthus spinosus* L., are so used in Dominica (31).

The Carib Indians cook and eat these plants as green vege- [263] tables.

Specimen citation: no herbarium specimens collected.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

824x
278
411

Manchineel is a common, coastal, evergreen tree of the West Indies and Caribbean area.

Caribs were the only Antillean Indians versed in the use of poisoned arrows which they formerly daubed in the caustic milky sap of the manchineel. This practice was first noted on Guadeloupe by the men of Columbus' party. BRETON (7) later described the process, « ... they (the Caribs) gave the tree a stroke with an ax and dipped their arrow-points into its milk-like sap. » GOWER (19) states that these Indians also used the fruit of the « manzanillo » as a fish poison. This may be true but possibly that writer is confusing the fruits of the manchineel with those of babarra (*Diospyros ebenaster*), a potent and well-known fish poison of the Caribs.

[226]

Specimen citation: 2701.

Jatropha spp.

Physic-Nut. — Medecinier.

824x
278

Two local species of this common coastal genus of the West Indies are known to the Island Caribs. Varieties of *J. gossypifolia* L. with purplish-red flowers are called medecinier blanc and medecinier noir; *J. curcas* L. is known simply as medecinier. The capsules of both species possess seeds which are frequently used medicinally (8).

Caribs employ the seeds of medecinier either as a purgative or as an emetic depending upon the quantity given. A special purgative tea, given on the third day after parturition, is brewed from a mixture of the leaves of medecinier noir, leaves of balie doux (*Scoparia dulcis*), leaves of momben (*Spondias mombin*), sprigs of verveine (*Stachytarpheta* spp.), and ricinus oil (*Ricinus communis*). The leaves of medecinier are also used when boiled to make a tea given as a cure for general sickness.

[846]

Specimen citation: 131 (T), 1611, 3207, 3208.

Manihot esculenta Crantz, Inst. Rei Herb. 1: 167. 1766.

824x

Manihot utilissima Pohl, Plant. Bras. Ic. Descr. 1: 32. t. 24. 1827.

Manihot manihot Cockerell, Bull. Torr. Bot. Cl. 19: 95. 1892.

Tapioca Plant, Cassava. — Manioc (Amer), Manioc Doux, Cama-

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

1824 **Richeria grandis** Vahl, Eclog. 1: 30. 1796.
Bois Bandé.

This large tree, common in the montane rain-forests of Dominica, ranges from Montserrat to Trinidad.

[314 632 224] The timber of bois bandé is widely used by the Caribs for boards, while a decoction of the bark is reputed to be an aphrodisiac. Hunters are careful not to cut or slash at this particular species when setting out for the chase for they believe any injury to such trees would cause their hunting to be unsuccessful.

Specimen citation: 567, 1318, 1895.

Ricinus communis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1007. 1753.
Castor-Bean. — Carapate (from the Carib word, *karapa*, meaning « oil »). — *lamáho* (w), *sulúanũ* (m).

A native of the Old World, much cultivated and spontaneous in the West Indies and continental tropical and subtropical America.

The Castor Bean is planted in every Carib dooryard and is known as carapate (the name more correctly applied to *Carapa guianensis*). [302] Ricinus oil is now substituted for the oil of *Carapa guianensis* for hair dressing. Formerly castor oil was possibly mixed (in place of the oil of *Carapa*) with bíset pigment (*Bixa orellana*) to form body paint. The leaves of the Castor Bean are heated and used both as a compress for internal pains and for massaging the spleen. A special blended purgative tea given after parturition uses castor oil as an ingredient (see *Jatropha* spp.); while another tea, a « cure » for gonorrhea, includes the seeds of this plant (see *Solanum torvum*). [278 752 846]

Specimen citation: 570.

Sapium caribaeum Urban, Symb. Ant. 3: 308. 1902.
La Glu, Lagli. — *uélekene*.

This tree is a native of the higher volcanic islands of the Lesser Antilles, and is recorded from Guadeloupe to St. Vincent. In Dominica it occurs chiefly at middle elevations although on the wetter windward side it approaches the coast.

The white sap of this species makes the best bird-lime utilized by the Carib. [223] The lime is obtained by making incisions on the

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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Caribs eat the fruits of the monben and formerly used them to prepare a fermented drink. The fruits are also believed to induce lactation but it is uncertain how they are employed. Inflamed or swollen joints are claimed to be cured by exposing them to the fumes of the burning kernels of monben fruits. A tea used to treat sore throat is made from either the leaves or seeds. Momben leaves are one ingredient in a special purging tea given after parturition (see *Jatropha* spp.), as well as in another tea used to induce lactation in women (see *Annona muricata*).

SAPINDACEAE. Soapberry Family.

Cardiospermum halicacabum Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 366. 1753.
Batard Persil.

An herbaceous climbing vine growing in tropical regions throughout the world.

The leaves of batard persil are crushed in water by the Caribs to make what is said to be a refreshing and cooling drink.

Specimen citation: 3289.

Sapindus saponaria Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 367. 1753.
Sapindus inaequalis DeCandolle, Prodr. 1: 608. 1824.
Soapberry, Soap Tree. — Bois Savonette[37]. — *túlisi* (m), *túluru* (w).

A tree of lower elevations found in the West Indies and in continental tropical America.

The fruits of the soapberry may be used for washing purposes, and in various parts of the Antilles the seeds are strung to make necklaces.

Dominica's Caribs employ the bark («scales») of *Sapindus saponaria* for soap while a concentrated decoction of the bark is reputed to stop dysentery.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

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[37] Not to be confused with two other Dominica trees, *Lonchocarpus* sp., and *Pithecellobium jupunba*, also called bois savonette.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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wound around the left wrist and forefinger. The spindle was set rotating by rolling its lower end (below the whorl) sharply down the thigh with the right hand. The thread thus spun was rolled onto the spindle-shank (above the guard) and the process recommenced. Cotton thread thus spun was used for weaving hammocks [39], head and leg bands [40], and more recently for mending clothes. Today cotton fiber is used principally for stuffing pillows and mattresses, and for calking canoes. However, a ritual bath, given to the mother after childbirth, utilized coton noir; it is discussed under *Ocimum micranthum*.

Specimen citation: 114 (T), 115 (T), 2541.

Hibiscus esculentus Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 696. 1753.
Abelmoschus esculentus Moench, Meth. 617. 1794.

Okra. — Gombo. — *inéku* (see also *Lonchocarpus* spp.).

A native of the Old World tropics, this species is widely cultivated. It was first recorded from the West Indies in 1750 (21). and is a familiar garden vegetable in Dominica.

Okra is either eaten as a vegetable or is used as an ingredient in a local soup known as « calalou ». However, a Carib hunter must not put any gombo in the pot with the game he cooks or his dogs and gun would lose their power of taking any more game of that sort. The leaves are used as shampoo in washing the hair to promote growth. A superstition also exists that eaten gombo tops will cause one to meet the persons who have been speaking ill of one.

Specimen citation: 136 (T).

Hibiscus tiliaceus Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 694. 1753.
Hibiscus elatus Swartz, Prodr. 102. 1788.
Pariti tiliaceum St. Hilaire, Fl. Bras. Merid. 1: 256. 1827.

Mahoe. — Maho (also spelled mahot, or mahaut) Doux. — *uainiu*, *udiu*.

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[39] It is thought that the Island Caribs first introduced the cotton hammock into the Lesser Antilles from continental South America.

[40] Such articles were all listed by CHANCA (69) in his famous letter, and it is interesting to note that certain of these are still woven by the Caribs of Guiana.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

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Lantana camara Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 627. 1753.
Wild Sage. — Mabizou.

Wild sage is widely distributed throughout tropical and subtropical America from Florida to Argentina; it has been introduced also into similar climatic regions of the Old World. As a weedy shrub it occurs in Dominica in waste places at lower and middle elevations.

The root is placed in unheated water which is then drunk by the Carib as a cure for gonorrhea. If this plant is identical with the « Indian sage » (*waluhúmeru*) of Breton the « balm », distilled by detaching a leaf, was used as a styptic. Sufferers from pleurisy would also expose their sick side to steam rising from a pot of boiling leaves. For a further use of this plant see *Ipomoea pes-caprae*. [278] [757]

Specimen citation: 858, 3201.

Petrea kohautiana Presl, Bot. Bemerk. 99. 1844.
Purple Wreath. — Fleur (La Fête) de Dieu.

A showy woody vine of the Lesser Antilles, common on Dominica at lower elevations especially on the windward coast.

The purple flowers of this vine, together with those of branda (*Chiococca alba*), are brewed into a tea used as an abortive. Another tea, utilizing this plant as an ingredient, is described under *Myrcia citrifolia*. [278] [847]

Specimen citation: 870, 3279.

Stachytarpheta spp.
Verveine. — *kuiékuiéti* (« slippery, slimy »), *kurîbîš dkuani* (« bird-bath » or « twist-bath »).

Two species of verveine, *S. cayennensis* (L. C. Rich.) Vahl and *S. jamaicensis* (L.) Vahl, are common in Dominica. These plants are weeds with a wide dispersal in tropical America.

A tea from verveine, made by boiling the whole plant, is used by the Carib in ritual bathing (for undoing spells, etc.), for colds and in fact for « any illness ». The whole plant also is a constituent of not only a special purgative tea given after parturition (see *Jatropha* spp.) but also a ritual bath discussed under *Ocimum micranthum*. [278] [846]

Specimen citation: 3213, 3305.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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constituent of various ritual baths (i.e. connected with animalistic beliefs). A special bath is given eight or nine days after childbirth to the mother and another to the newborn infant. Plants used in the mother's bath are fon bazin, coton noir (*Gossypium vitifolium*), roku (*Bixa orellana*), verveine (*Stachytarpheta* spp.), semen contra (*Chenopodium ambrosioides*), sou marque (*Cassia bicapsularis*), pistache (*Arachis hypogaea*), and bouton blanc (*Egletes prostrata*). Plants used in the baby's bath include fon bazin, pachouli (? *Pogostemon* sp.), and graines z'yeux (unidentified). Another ritual bath for «unlucky» canoes is concocted from leaves of fon bazin, patate bord la mer (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*), maho piment (*Daphnopsis caribaea*), 'ti baume (*Hyptis atrorubens*), marigold (*Wedelia trilobata*), roku (*Bixa orellana*), malbruk (*Piper* spp.), lavandre (*Alpinia speciosa*), poivre Guinée (*Aframomum granum-paradisi*), etc. Finally a ritual bath for colds includes leaves of fon bazin, corossol (*Annona muricata*), bois cabrit (*Aegiphila martinicensis*), and kudjuruk (*Petiveria alliacea*).

Specimen citation: 3200, 3302.

SOLANACEAE. Nightshade Family.

Brunfelsia americana Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 191. 1753.
Rain-Tree. — Empoisonneur.

This small scrubby tree is found in woodlands of the West Indies from eastern Puerto Rico to Dominica. On the latter island it is most frequent at lower elevations on the windward Atlantic coast.

The small ripe berries of this species are used by the Carib as a poison.

Specimen citation: 3183, 3209.

Capsicum frutescens Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 189. 1753.
Capsicum baccatum Linnaeus, Mant. 1: 47. 1767.
Red Pepper. — Piment. — *dti*[51] (w); *buémuē*, *ualéiri* (m).

[51] According to Lovén (37) the Taino name for this species was *aji* from which has come the Spanish form *aji* (earlier *axi*) widely used in America today.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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a tea used to combat diarrhea ; the other ingredients are discussed under *Myrcia citrifolia*.

Specimen citation : no specimen collected.

Scoparia dulcis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 116. 1753.

Balié Doux [52].

A weedy annual widespread in the tropics of America and the Old World. In Dominica the plant is found in wet open fields at lower and middle elevations.

From the leaves and stems of balié doux is prepared a tea which is used by the Caribs to bathe their children. It is also drunk occasionally as a fever preventative. The leaves are an ingredient in a special purgative tea given after parturition (see *Jatropha* spp.).

Specimen citation : 3325.

BIGNONIACEAE. Trumpet-Creeper Family.

Crescentia cujete Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 626. 1753.

Calabash. — Calebasse. — *matálu* (m), *uíra* (w).

The calabash tree is found in southern Florida, throughout continental tropical America as well as in the West Indies but almost always close to human habitation. It occurs in Dominica from lower to middle elevations and as elsewhere is frequently planted for its utilitarian fruits.

Calabash wood, though not available in large sizes, is moderately hard, tough and strong, and is utilized in various areas of Latin America for tool handles, ox yokes, etc. (50). Elsewhere in its range the tart copious inner pulp of the calabash fruit has served as food (21), but more often as a domestic medicine, as a remedy for colds (50), as a purgative which can bring about abortion in cattle (50), and as an ingredient of a poultice used against skin diseases. The fruit is reportedly the source of a black dye for cloth. The woody thin shells of the fruit after scraping are used

[52] It is not certain whether this is identical with the Carib « balié » mentioned by Breton (7).

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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This species is found in the West Indies and in South America from Venezuela to Brazil.

Various species of this genus are used as fish poisons by aborigines of the American tropics, and probably several species possessing this toxic principle are called *kunámi*. BRETON was the first to mention a *kunámi* as an Island Carib fish poison (7). LOVEN (37) thinks this, the commonest fish poison of the Island Caribs, to be identical with the *conamy* of the Galibis and with the *kunan* of the Wapishianas. LOVEN believes that the Island Caribs brought this plant with them from South America.

Today bundles of the leaves of *kunámi* are pounded and [226 278] thrown into river pools by the Dominica Caribs. When the fish begin to jump out of the water to escape the effects of the drug, the Caribs jump in and seize them. Unlike *babará* this drug may be used in sea-water pools as well as in those of the rivers.

Specimen citation: 3195.

Egletes prostrata (Swartz) O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. Pl. 334. 1891.
Egletes domingensis Cassini, Dict. Sci. Nat. 14: 265. 1819.
Bouton Blanc.

A perennial prostrate herb of sandy shores, with a distribution from Hispaniola and Jamaica to Venezuela.

The Dominica Caribs utilize bouton blanc as one ingredient of [846] a ritual bath given to the mother eight or nine days after childbirth (see *Ocimum micranthum*).

Specimen citation: 773.

Neurolaena lobata (Linnaeus) R. Brown in DeCandolle, Prodr. 6: 292. 1837.
Z'Herbes à Pique.

This shrubby perennial is widespread in the thickets and woodlands of tropical America.

Z'herbes à pique is used by the Creoles of Dominica as a remedy for yaws (30). They also use the pounded stems and leaves of this plant either as a mild fish poison or as a wash (mixed with the bark of *Mammea americana* L.) applied to domestic animals infested with ticks.

The plant is known also to the Caribs whose women rub the [862]